Although claims have been formulated in this application to particular combinations of features, it should be understood that the scope of the disclosure herein also includes any novel feature or any novel combination of features disclosed either explicitly or implicitly for any generalization or modification thereof which would be apparent to persons skilled in the relevant art, whether or not such relates to the same invention as presently claimed in any claim and whether or not it mitigates any or all of the same technical problems as confronted by the present invention. The applicants hereby reserve the right to formulate new claims to such features and/or combinations of such features during the prosecution of the present application or of any further application derived thereof.

What is claimed is:

1. A system for providing a software program with selective access to a plurality of test case data elements, said system comprising:

a destination directory structure coupled to said software program;

a central repository that stores said plurality of test case data elements in a storage medium, said central repository being remote from said destination directory structure;

a test server coupled to said central repository;

a test program that initiates a test case instruction identifying a data element of said plurality of test case data elements in said central repository; and

a test client coupled said test server and said test program to receive said test case instruction from said test program and to request an access structure to said identified data element from said test server, said access structure to said identified data element being established in said destination directory structure.

2. The system of claim **1** further comprising a execution instruction generated by said test program that initiates an execution of said software program based on said identified data element.

3. The system of claim **1** wherein said identified data element contains expected results of an execution of said software program, the system further comprising a verification module that compares actual results of said execution of said software program with said expected results of said execution accessible in said destination directory structure.

4. The system of claim **1** wherein said test case instruction comprises a data structure that includes a test case data element identifier, an associated read/write status, an associated location parameter defining a location in said destination directory structure, and an associated version parameter identifying a version of said identified data element.

5. The system of claim **4** wherein said identified data element is located in said central repository and said access to said identified data element comprises a symbolic link to said identified data element, if said associated read/write status equals read-only, said symbolic link being located in said destination directory structure.

6. The system of claim **4** wherein said identified data element is located in said central repository and said access to said identified data element comprises a copy of said identified data element, if said associated read/write status equals write-able, said copy being located in said destination directory structure.

7. The system of claim **1** wherein said access to said identified data element comprises a copy of said identified test case data element provided from a revision control system directory located in said central repository.

8. The system of claim **1** wherein said test case instruction comprises a test case identifier defining a specified subset of said plurality of test case data elements to said software program requires access via said destination directory structure.

9. The system of claim **1** wherein said central repository is located in said test server, and said software program and said destination directory structure are located at a client test system.

10. The system of claim **1** wherein said central repository stores a plurality of versions of at least one of said plurality of test case data elements, and said identified data element is a past version of one of said plurality of test case data elements.

11. The system of claim **1** further comprising a central repository administration application for managing data and labels associated with said test case data elements stored in said central repository.

12. A method for providing a software program with selective access to a plurality of test case data elements, said software program being coupled to a destination directory structure, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a central repository that stores said plurality of test case data elements in a storage medium, said central repository being remote from said destination directory structure;

providing a test server coupled to said central repository;

managing access to said central repository;

sending a test case instruction that identifies a data element of a data element of said plurality of test case data elements in said central repository;

receiving said test case instruction at a test server;

locating said identified data element in said central repository; and

establishing an access structure in said destination directory structure that provides access to said identified data element.

13. The method of claim **12** wherein the step of establishing an access structure comprises the step of copying said identified data element to said destination directory structure, if said identified data element was requested with a write-able status.

14. The method of claim **12** wherein the step of establishing an access structure comprises the step of creating in said destination directory structure a symbolic link to said identified data element in said central repository, if said identified data element was requested with a read-only status.

15. The method of claim **12** wherein the step receiving said test case instruction at a test server comprises the step of receiving a test case data element identifier, an associated read/write status, an associated location parameter defining a location in said destination directory structure, and an associated version parameter identifying a version of said identified data element.

16. The method of claim **12** further comprising the step of initiating execution of said software program such that said software program operates on said access structure in said destination directory structure.

17. The method of claim **12** wherein said identified data element represents an expected result of an execution of said software program, and further comprising the step of verifying an actual result of an execution of said software program with said expected result.

18. The method of claim **17** further comprising the step of deleting said access structure if, responsive to said verifying step, said actual results match said expected result.